"Where there is no vision the people perish"

THE POETRY REVIEW

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THE VEIL

R. C. TREVELYAN

THEOLOGIAN

What then do you believe?

POET

Alas, my friend, not much.
Very little have I learnt from books or teachers.
But there are many things
That I have learnt to love:
The beauty of flowers and foliage
Reflected in a dark still tree-girt pool;
The voice of a friend; the scent of new-mown hay;
The cawing of rooks and jackdaws; a poem's charm.
Such things delight me: I love them: but they pass.

THEOLOGIAN

Is there not something that will never pass?

POET

That well may be; but I have never known it.

THEOLOGIAN

Look on those things, and listen: they are his language:
Look through them, upon the very face of Love.

POET

Would he reveal himself, with his own hand
Let him tear the veil. How can I rend its beauty?
Soon will Death come, that render of veils, and quencher
Of all belief and doubt. With him is truth.

THE FINAL MOMENT

RACHEL ANNAND TAYLOR

Let not that conquering contagion
  Of vulnerable vexed mortality
Finger my soul: let not oblivion
  In sick sweet fumes corrupt the core of me.
The sea-salt airs of transit would I savour.
  From the last peak of feverish rhythm I,
My pulse not sunk to a demi-semi-quaver,
  The marvel of departure would descry:
Nor lapse inert within the chartless Dark
  Where who knows what strange compass might prevail,

Nor blindly let adrift my fragile barque,
  But wing her with a white exultant sail
Like that of great Odysseus, self-outlaw,
The second time he cast off Ithaca.

THE OLD SHEPHERD

WILFRID GIBSON

The baffling blizzard and the scathing wind
Searching his aching body through and through
Hamper his progress while he struggles on
And dawn with anxious heart, to find
The whereabouts of his lost ewes, last night
By whirling drifts deep buried out of sight—
When, even as all hope
Of reaching them seems gone,
From out the mounded slope
Beneath his very feet
There comes a muffled bleat;
And, digging now to rescue them from death,
With tingling blood and eager breath,
In his old limbs' rekindled heat
Youth's vigour surges up anew.

PRETTY THINGS

A. E. COPPARD

When I first became a father
I'd to buy them many things,
  Pretty things,
The kidlings and their mother,
  Pretty things.
That indeed was no great asking,
By my soul 'twas joyous tasking;
  Happy days,
  Sweet the praise;
But times do change from one year to another.

Life and love betray the giver,
Unrelenting time denies
  As it flies
All the fruits of all endeavour,
  As it flies;
Cupid's seal will not renew us,
Silly fate must still pursue us
  To shear the wings
  Of pretty things,
And they'll be gone, as I'll be gone, for ever.

SPRING IN THE CITY

JOHN REDWOOD ANDERSON

The girl that like a shrouded bud
went wrapped in furs, white, black, or brown,
feels the year's challenge through her blood,
breaks out and blossoms up and down—
  Girls are the flowers that light the town!

Now daffodils, that grew for nought
in many a poor man's pleasant hold,
by barrow-loads are hawked about,
at what fantastic prices sold—
  Pluto for Proserpine, gold for gold!

These, and the girl whose petalled gown
are all of spring that can be seen,
outstrip the trees still stark and brown,
with scarce a whisper of young green—
  Girls are the flowers that light the town!

Now rises from the winter's cold
the reborn spirit of man's desire,
at what fantastic price to hold
love's short-lived daffodils of fire—
  Pluto for Proserpine, gold for gold!

    Old savage March lifts up
    the rain in a grey cloud-cup,
    spills it and flings it whistling down
    on all the roofs and streets of the town.

Old savage March lets out
his rage in a windy clout,
or sits alone on the roof and howls,
hour upon hour, down the chimney-cowls.

Then, suddenly, the poor old savage dies,
and April, with eyes dim,
cries and covers him
under a clean blue cloth of skies
with white clouds round the rim.

And the buds break to flower, and then
flowers wither and the fruit drops down;
the girl is never a girl again,
and the bridal-veil is a christening-gown—
For girls are the flowers that light the town.

"I HAVE NO FAME"

LORD GORELL

I

I have no fame; my verse is all unread,
Unnoticed and unknown:
Yet am I one with the majestic dead:
Their vision is my own,
My stool is by their throne.

II

What matters it? I write because I must,
I sing but as I can:
Beauty is Life, the judgment that is just—
Across the ages' span
I voice my heart to Man.

IN HER NINETYFOURTH YEAR

WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

Age was no burden, the years set so lightly
It seemed a fiction that must be denied,
So clear her mind, so young her heart, her spirit;
Time she defied.

Time glanced at her, indomitable, splendid,
Small as the queen whose reign embraced her own;
His stroke forebore, so bright her eyes, her vision,
Her hearthside throne.

Time said, She has the golden gift of living
Zest to enjoy, endure, to mould and make;
She shall be dowered with a life's abundance
For living's sake.

And so she lived and saw the generations
Rise up and pass in peace and war, and then
Twice more the broken pattern in her lifetime,
Men scourging men.

And wisdom graced her, and strong calm, and loving,
Love that brimmed over her compassionate heart
As lone she gazed upon Man's night of sorrow
And played her part.

The world's sick haste she marked, yet spun serenely
The thread of patience; shaped her life to praise
Courage and kindness, meekness and forbearance;
So spent her days.

Till at the last, when from a Sussex window
She saw Spring's fingertips break through the rime,
She passed, fulfilled with peace in life's surrender,
At one with time.

LEGEND

G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON

O Lady walking as in sleep
The bounds of this unhallowed wood,
Against the Enchantress may you keep
Your fond, your legendary good,

And though the green leaf turn to dry,
And that grim falcon-speck above
Harden the mercy of the sky,
In your soft breast keep warm the dove:

And, though the white of early snow
  Be shamed in ruts and soiled with dung,
And prowl in day's most dewy glow
  The lustful dog with hanging tongue,

Keep unperplexed and unconfined
  Above the lewd, the darkening plain,
The charities of your chaste mind
  Where snow and brightness take no stain.

THE CHANGED WOMAN

VIOLA MEYNELL

She was always one crying easily for aid,
Not stridently—she had a coaxing tone,
Nor yet for any reason worth being said:
"Come, I might have to spend the day alone."
"I've had a horrid dream, can I come in?"
"Hear the owl's mournful cry under the moon;
The winter dark is here, somehow I'm sad."
"It's dull to be apart, won't you come soon
To laugh together?" And we her friends were glad
To chase the silly clouds upon her joy.

Those were the better years. She lived and lost.
Did we hear much of those slight summonings now?
Fate's hand lay heavy on her, and the cost
Was in her haunted eyes and wondering brow.
Where she had still her love the worst befell.
Two of us met and spoke. "Have you not heard?
To-day you saw her and she did not tell
Her life's light has gone out?" "She said no word."

GOODBYE

GERALD BULLETT

Were this the last goodbye,
Wan hope and trailing wing,
How deep our hearts would sigh,
How fast our hands would cling.

Ah, lips, be not so loud.
The listening gods are nigh.
Who knows but even now
We breathe our last goodbye?

MUSICAL BOX

"O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,
From growing commerce loose her latest chain,
And let the fair white-wing'd peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky
And mix the seasons and the golden hours;
Till each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailéd fleets and armèd towers,
Ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of earth and crown'd with all her flowers."
—Tennyson, *Ode for the International Exhibition.*

F. L. LUCAS

Stiff creaks the key—grey with the dust of time,
The rusted cogwheels whir an ancient air—
"Fading Away"; and then the childlike chime
Of *Cloches du Monastère*;
Meyerbeer, Offenbach, Weber. Round there glide——
Polka, galop, mazurka—dim wraiths that long since have died.

Little, frail voices, bell-like rising, falling,
From this worm-pitted wood where lost you lay,
Across how vast a chasm calling, calling,
And from how far away!—
Slim waists awhirl in clouds of crinoline,
Beards like that sombre Prophet's through the gloom of Endor seen.

Poor ghosts, awakened from your coffined prison;
Hopes once so high, beneath a brighter sun!
And yet—we would not see your day re-risen,
Nor bid Time backward run.
And *you*—you would but shrink in agony
Back to the grave, could you see us—what Life has come to be.

The Golden Year seemed knocking at your doors;
Science, your good Fairy, waved her wand of steel;
Soon "this fair planet" should have rest from wars
And grow Earth's Commonweal—
All peoples free, and wise, and Christian,
Glory to God in His Heaven, and on the earth to Man!

But though we have faced three barbarisms driving
Against the shattered bastions of the West;
Though still we dwell mid ruins, that buried living
Mothers with child at breast;
Though *our* age genders devils, that have slain
And sacked, and burned, and tortured, with more joy than Tamburlaine,

Though now we know that none knew humankind—
How it lives but a hand's breadth from the Savage still;
That coiling deep within the wisest mind
Dark powers bemock man's will;
That the soul is but a buried battlefield,
Where phantom forces grapple, with faces unrevealed;

Yet how be homesick for your vanished dream?
Noble your visions were—and nobly sung;
And yet, sometimes, too solemn now you seem;
Sometimes you seem too young.
Bitter and ruthless nips our winter air;
And yet in your golden autumn—too many fogs hung there.

Ah, well for you your confidence in fate,
The energy that made your great wheels spin;
And yet—too many poor sat by your gate,
Too many rich within;
You would not love us much, who tread your dust;
Less good, perhaps, then *you* were—and yet, perhaps, more just.

Your books endure; longer than ours, maybe:
At least *that* glory you have made your own.
But your presence might have choked us—save for three
I gladly would have known.
By one the Kelmscott ripples lightly stir;
And one sleeps on by Woodbridge; one, by Dorchester.

Play on, old tunes—out of Infinity
Dance yet a little, till you fade at last.
Untroubled by our bleaker destiny,
For you all pain is past.
We too shall follow in a little while,
O great age, that we honour—yet, as we honour, smile.

THE FULL AWAKENING

L. AARONSON

All day I drowsed with summer in my hair,
Summer of all day sun and sundial lawn;
But when I woke with waking absolute
I knew I'd lived a season through in sleep.
The trees were taking light and waking air
Along their lazy leaves, through which the faun
Looked with no vivid longing; the aery fruit,
Blind with its fulness, had no hope to keep.

Amongst earth's shadows tears were glittering.
There were farewells in every nodding flower.
Voices came softly over like the talk
In sickrooms, and a desultory bird
Pointed the upper silence, uttering
That which the silence meant. I felt the power
Of my own waking from the catafalque
Of dead desire, come to the live, last word.

I felt myself, because I suffered change
With all the pain of conscience prised awake,
The living law of change. I stood where Time
With chance at equinox was ripely free.
I knew my shadow at its fullest range
The symbol of the season. I could take
My natural, human place. This was the prime
Of peace under the waiting, windfall tree.

ALL THE FINE LADIES

LOUIS GOLDING

There is no life like living
  But Death also hath charms
Beyond hating and forgiving
  And serenades and psalms.

Holla! But it is pleasant
  To have for mistresses
All ladies but the present
  From Helen to Deslys.

Yet these, too, whose lips scarlet,
  Whose chaste cheeks haunt you now—
The millionaire's prime harlot,
  The nun wrapt in her vow—

One moon, or the moon after,
  These, too, shall bring their tears
Or the thin ghost of their laughter
  To comfort your cold ears.

Then sweetly fall on slumber,
  When the brief day declines,
For not Mahound shall number
  Your host of concubines!

THE CAPTIVE BIRD OF PARADISE

RUTH PITTER

Give me the bird of Paradise, though dying,
Exiled and doomed, ravished from the Elysian
Forest where I shall never see it flying,
Where Cœlogyne flowers like a vision:
Never shall hear the love-tormented crying.

For there abides the torrent of golden wire,
The silver silk, the cactus-anther river,
The rose-death purple mantled on with fire,
The dying-dolphin green where lightnings quiver,
The trembling arches of the silent lyre.

Though I shall never see the sudden turning
Into a sphery monstrance, globe of splendour,
The ecstasy that is beyond our learning,
The action and the attitude that render
Love back to whence it came, the phoenix burning:

Though I shall never hear, rending asunder
The bonds that trammel love, that cry of passion,
The voice that is more terrible than thunder:
Though at its death my life be desolation,
Give me the bird of paradise, the wonder.

FROM AGATHIAS, THE HISTORIAN

(Byzantine Poet, 6th Century, A.D.)

JACK LINDSAY

All night I sigh awake, and when the day
brings me a little peace, and solace nears,
the twittering swallows always chase away
that darling doze and blur my eyes with tears.
Tightly I close my lids, but all in vain:
Rhodanthé haunts my yearning heart again.

Quiet, you jealous chatterers! was it I
who tore out Philomela's tongue? O wail,
wail on the hills for Itylos, or cry
out of the hoopoe's nest your angry tale.
So I may drowse . . . and then, with gentle charms,
A dream may fold me in Rhodanthé's arms.

GHOSTS IN CONVERSATION

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

"What I would give," said shadow
To shadow, "for one sweet brief
Moment of warmth, of flesh, of living
Love, hate, even grief."

"Love? Hate? Grief?" the other,
Puzzled, lost, replied;
"Words I once heard, but forgot their meaning
Long before I died."

FLYING MACHINERY

BRYAN GUINNESS
(Lord Moyne)

A croaking overhead: the Business Men like Swans;
A creaking overhead: the Swans like Business Men.

THE KISS CONSIDERED

JOHN PUDNEY

If I kiss you tonight
Will you leave me for ever
With nothing to write
But a note in a diary
A note of enquiry
If I was right
To kiss you and sever
The bright from the fiery
The wise from the clever
My sight from your sight.

JAMES STEPHENS*

In Memoriam: 26 XII 1950

JOHN GAWSWORTH

How all little things come
To illuminate mind
Remembering you
And how you were kind
To the bird and the leaf,
To joy and to grief,
To the shell and the sand,
To the wave on the strand
And each star in the sky
That would loyally ply
To a chilled Demi-God
Lost on peat-reeking sod!
O how little things come
Now to mind with you dumb,
Seumas, ember of Elysium!

* *The Poetry Review* proudly recalls Mr. Stephens' contributions in 1912, under Harold Monro's editorship, particularly the first publication of a suite of eight poems.—Ed.

MY FORMER SELF

CLIFFORD DYMENT

I speak to him and he doesn't answer.
  Does he hear, I wonder?
Why does he look around in the garden
  With so much wonder?

Why should I mind that every moment
  He wants to treasure?
He pulls up butterfly after butterfly
  As he digs for treasure.

He reaches up into the sunlight
  And picks flower after flower
In the broken looking-glass garden
  Where seed runs to flower.

FROM THE GREEK OF THEOGNIS

JOHN HEATH-STUBBS

I have given you wings, and over the infinite seas
  And the whole earth, they will easily carry you on;
There shall be no meal set, nor feast given, but you
  Will be there, reclining between the lips of the guests,
While still the young and beautiful sing your name,
  Setting your praises in order, to clear flute-notes;
And when you go down to the dreary depths of the earth,
  To Hades' mansion, the place of so much lamenting,
Never, although you are dead, shall you loose your renown,
  But men will think of you as one of a deathless fame:
You'll travel, Cyrnus, about the Hellenic lands
  And islands, across the fishy, unharvested deep,
Not mounted on horseback, but sped by the gracious favour
  And gift of the bright and violet-garlanded Muses
To all who take you in; and sharing their immortality
  You'll live, a song to the future, while Earth and Sun stand firm.
But I, I am nothing to you, either great or little;
  You cheat me with words, as one fobs off a small child.

JAMES JOYCE

ROBERT GREACEN

Let us recall that bitter, dogged Dubliner, James Joyce,
Whose weary chaos travelled Europe in his aching brain.
Trieste, Zurich, Paris, Rome and other cities
Knew the young exile buoyed on anger and contempt
For all that was provincial, meanly self-sufficing.
A furnace blazed in his mind's core perpetually
And would not give him rest from constant labour
Until the multi-imaged soul cascaded many thousand words
Barbed and pristine with a febrile, love-hate energy.
Silence, exile, cunning—these sharp keys he cut
To unlock the obdurate gates to Europe.
Those keys made in his Dublin prison in friend-wasted days,
When Ibsen, Jonson, Hauptmann floodlit each chamber of his mind
And he determined not to honour those fierce claims
Of country, family and church: *I will not serve.*
Then think of him, half-blind and penniless in European towns
Racked by the restive *daimon* of creativeness,
Showing a will inflexible against the little streets
With hatred in their piping, rabble voices,
He ceaselessly dredging an oceanic mind for images
To haunt our splintered century and show us to ourselves,
Crying aloud with all the anguish of our time.

AD MATREM : MCMXLV

IAIN FLETCHER

These years away from all you represent—
The sense of gentleness within a room,
Old music filtering through a quiet bloom
Of fingers at the clavichord's ascent,
When every breath had borrowed your consent,
When in their cadences wrists could assume
An immature bouquet of prayer; to whom
In those small years the stars themselves gave vent—

Are nothing lost. Though absence drowned
Each of the bodies of cosmology,
And day with night was fallen without sound,

Before the waters had expelled the earth,
Before the virgin prisms of the sky,
You were the void that rioted with birth.

SONG OF THE MIDDLE-AGED IRISH SEA CAPTAIN

"Too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart . . ."—W. B. Yeats.

PETER RUSSELL

Because she would not have me in my youth
I have sailed the seas and played another tune.
Now I am home I find her at thirty-three
A grey-haired beautiful old crone
And such as lovely women should not be,
Childless, disconsolate and gazing on the truth.
And I had hoped for many a year to see
Her put aside her books and give her own
To conversation, love and natural growth.

An intellectual woman's heartfelt sighs
Add to confusion in her muddled head;
Illumination damped upon her eyes
Imagination sacrificed to bread.
Not all the secret nightly tears she's shed
Can ever clear her thought or make her wise.
She'll never see that till a maid is wed
Still young and beautiful and brought to bed,
Her most ideal vision sinks and dies.

She sobs herself to sleep; alone she wakes,
And takes no pleasure in the mirror's light.
She finds no consolation in a verse
Or tune, now happiness is out of sight.
There's little left to choose. What once seemed worse,
Contemptible multitudes and their mistakes
Who choose a likely God to fill a purse,
Than her election no more wrong nor right,
No longer have her heart and so it breaks.

Now that my fifteen years are done and I,
Who've changed myself but did not look for change,

Have found her altered by the years and by
Unnatural independence and a strange
Secretive burden like the clinging mange
That macerates for ever hand and eye,
I know no circumstance can now arrange
That never ending bounty in exchange
For loneliness and living with a lie.

E. MAY CATTELL

An Appreciation by E. Guy Pertwee

It is hard to believe that May Cattell is no longer with us and that we are the losers of that vital personality and generous nature that now, alas, only remains with us as a memory. Her place will indeed be hard to fill and many hundreds of verse speakers, old and young who have benefited from her sympathetic advice will mourn the loss of so sensitive and understanding an examiner.

I well remember the first time I ever met May Cattell—it was in Birmingham in the '20's that she came before me for the senior grade of the Associated Board of Royal Schools—and what a favourable impression her work left upon me. I also remember the pleasure I felt when some weeks later I received a letter from her asking to study with me for her diplomas.

For many years afterwards she continued those studies winning many awards in London and in the Midlands Festivals and brilliantly passing double diplomas for the L.R.A.M. and L.G.S.M. in addition to the Gold Medal of the Poetry Society.

She was for several years a most valued and ever popular examiner for the Poetry Society and it is difficult to speak too highly enough of the fine work she did both in examination and in the Festival movement throughout the country. Her loss will be keenly felt and deeply regretted in a very wide field.

We, who were associated with her pay tribute to a fine artist and a warm generous personality.

AROUND MY SHELVES

II. NEW POEMS: 1920-1950

BY

HAVELOCK ELLIS (1859-1939)
T. STURGE MOORE (1870-1944)
LYTTON STRACHEY (1880-1932)
ANNA WICKHAM (1884-1947)
THOMAS BURKE (1886-1945)
CHARLES WILLIAMS (1886-1945)
W. J. TURNER (1889-1946)
ROBERT NICHOLS (1893-1944)
F. R. HIGGINS (1896-1941)
"LEWIS GRASSIC GIBBON" (*c.* 1900-1935)

Collated by a bibliophilic Member of the Poetry Society

The association of ideas! As I turn now to the shelves that house a thousand or more inscribed works of friends and acquaintances, I delay; I hesitate; I linger. For personal associations now overwhelm me and I am in a quite private thrall. Of the ten authors from whom I first drew to quote manuscripts, I could only claim Arthur Machen as a friend of long standing, Ross, Rhys and Wratislaw as companions at charmingly convivial tables, and Falkner and Canon Gray as cordial correspondents. For Johnson, Middleton, the "Michael Fields", and Plarr were either by time or circumstance outside my orbit. But now, in this part of my library, suddenly I become perturbed, and, as I reach books and papers of many close to me, I am besieged by memories, see again many faces, am richly embarrassed with the immediate past.

There are original holograph verses around me, in books and folders, in abundance. Let me lay a tithe among them—ten by the lately dead—upon the memorial altar.

Here is a little brown-morrocco book, pocket-size and pleasantly tooled and decorated in gold. It contains, in pencil, forty-eight quatrains, translations made from Spanish Folk Songs, in the hand of the author of the immortal *The Soul of Spain*. Forty-seven of these, collation reveals, have appeared in *Sonnets with Folk Songs from the Spanish* (Golden Cockerel Press, 1925); but there is yet one to add to the canon which missed Havelock Ellis' assembling eye:

As child I was often weeping,
And now I weep much more:
In childhood for my playthings,
And now for one I adore.

Now the hand rests upon Sturge Moore's last book, *The Unknown Known and a Dozen odd Poems* (Martin Secker: The Richards Press, 1939), the pendant to his four-volume *Collected Poems*. As this is the dedication copy sent to this embryonic bibliophile, it is naturally doubly-prized; but it is even additionally valued since it contains "laid-in" a completely variant version of *Inward Controversy*, the third of the *Four Poems Suggested to an Old Man by a Young Man's Love-Talk*, sent to him, as the particular "Young Man", by the poet on May 2, 1938. It is clear that it is more than a first draft, it is practically a different poem:

Most fair yet frail, too sweet to come to naught,
A silence in the roaring flood of strife,
Divine if deeply contemplating life
Can weld her to the finest steel of thought.
What cross looms from the sky in cruelty wrought
To lift her nailed-down tenderness? what knife
Has claimed her heart for sheathe? What heedless scythe
Sweeps on till she within its curve be brought?

Beauty re-dawns soon to be overcast
Though gay with innocence . . . Ah! none dispute
That flowers have full often failed of fruit!
—Up Hope! and climb! . . . have we not seen the past,
Procession brave with defamed famed at last,
Both tramplers and maligners oft confute?

The Williams and Norgate first edition of Lytton Strachey's *Landmarks in French Literature* stands near by, a book containing an original verse by its author inserted. The collector's cheek mantles a blush as he handles it. He recalls a day in January 1928 when, a schoolboy of sixteen, he shamelessly and daringly invited the stylist's autograph, suggesting there was nothing "sinful" in his request. The purist was in complete agreement and kindly prefaced his signature with a quatrain:

Yes, to ask is not a sin,
And enterprise is paying.
"Nothing venture, nothing win"—
Where's a truer saying?

Anna Wickham's shelf—four books, a handful of pamphlets, some suppressed proofs, notebooks containing some three hundred uncollected pieces—invites with its untapped lode. O great and glorious Anna, the Voice of Woman beating on the breast-bone of Man, thunderously tapping at times, romantically rapping at others! O the spate of the

Great! Here is a typical poem, one she also posted to Mr. Louis Untermeyer, who has already given it to his continent:

To Men

(Variation on Ella Wheeler Wilcox, after a poem of the same name).

Sirs—though we fail you—let us live;
Be just, have pity, and forgive.
Think how poor Mother Eve was brought
To being as God's afterthought.

God had a vast expanse of clay
To fashion Adam's primal day;
Yet was the craftsman's limit shown;
His *image could not live alone.*

Yet God supports eternal life
Without the comfort of a wife;
So it was proved ere we began
God has miscalculated man.

And of his fault, he took a part—
Formed woman's brain and woman's heart
Of Imperfection—vainly planned—
To love, to serve, to understand.

How can you wonder, if we stray
Through coward night and sloven day
When power in us can but reflect
God's wifelessness and man's defect.

Had lonely God when earth was new
Some blest remembrances of two,
He had not made one half of life
A shambles and a heel-stung strife.

Do you remember, O my Dear,
The seventh night of our first year,
The night when my first son was given
With ecstasy to tutor Heaven?—

Had God loved thus, all Hell were blind
And famine, lust and murder kind.

Come, my co-adjutor, belov'd smith,
Raise thou thy hammer—break the myth.

There is no marvel of creation
Exists beyond our full relation—
Yet God shall strengthen from his sins
To breed us new and breed us twins.

Thou bungling artificer, yet
Thou shalt be artist and beget
And on the form of Chaos lie
To wash the earth and raise the sky.

Not equal I, but counterpart—
And in relation is my heart
Perfect with man's—as with his mind—
Mine is all strong to loose and bind.

Come then, my husband, here and rest
On my so well-remolded breast.
At morning we'll go out and see
How well God works for you and me.

An inscribed run of Thomas Burke's books comes into view. "Thomas Burke *of Eltham*" (as the British Museum catalogue still describes him) has long graduated beyond Clapham, Eltham, Highgate, Bloomsbury, Sydenham and Bayswater—and his adopted Limehouse—to be, as his posthumous volume of memories truly called him, "Son *of London*". His early poems (which, when not privately-printed, saw book-form first in his anthologies *An Artist's Day Book, The Contented Mind, The Charm of England* and in his *The Song Book of Quong Lee of Limehouse*) have been overlooked and under-anthologised since St. John Adcock compiled his *The Bookman Treasury of Living Poets*. But Burke, advancing stylistically, ever infused more poetry into his prose in his later years and, it was though, left it at that. But no ; and I became a surprised fellow-Cockney, one March morning in 1941 to receive from him as we sipped claret in the later blitzed El Vino off Piccadilly, his "first excursion in verse after twenty-two years". His love for the then-suffering London pulses in every line:

The Friend

You are with us in the terror by night and day;
You are with us in this rain of ruin and fire;

You are with us in creeping minutes of dismay,
In hours of hope, and when our pulses tire.

You are our comrade in this hail of hate;
Courage we had, and love, and vision true,
But to perfect our armour against fate,
We needed one thing more; we needed you.

And you are with us now, friend cold and pure;
Now we can see you plain while we have breath;
Never has Life so steeled us to endure
As your great shadow, Just and Mighty Death.

A box in Cecil Court provided the next poem, a verse Charles Williams sent the late D. H. S. Nicholson, editor of *The Oxford Book of Mystical Verse,* with a copy of *Windows of Night* at Christmastide 1924. Further arm-delving revealed more *Williamsiana* beneath; a small cache, in fact: two manuscript sonnets dedicated to Nicholson, *The End of the Journey* and *Because your natural mockery knows* . . . , a pencilled poem of forty lines, *And must you, dearest of my friends, combine* . . . , a mimeographed, autographed sonnet, *Ere I shall leave to think of joy and grief* . . . , and three privately-printed leaflets *It was a king of Negro-land, You who have served your days in thrall* and *An Urbanity,* as well as the first edition of *Divorce* (1920) given by the poet to his wife, Michal, and containing five "To Michal" poems.

It must have been in 1936 that these were acquired, and joyfully, I think, as I turn them over; for it was not very long after visits to Williams at Amen House with regard to an unpublished story for an envisaged collection, visits which drew *Et in sempiternum pireant* from him, " a more intellectual than sensational horror", as he wrote of it.

The Christmas poem for Nicholson, and some other select friends, is charmingly laudatory:

Ad Amicos Suos

If I knew well that all, in time to be,
Which lived of you, should only live through me,
With what a meek, and yet a conscious air,
Should I not bring this book wherein you share,
Since from your talk rose the best poems there!

But now, since your own industry secures
That seal upon the future which is yours,
Nothing I bring that I need care to show
But in your love—and how much better so,
For by that nothing all your height I know.

I know your friendship—each in its own place—
No fair exchange, but generous and free grace;
Nothing I bring, nothing I am, and you,
To that most hapless nothing being true,
Are by so much the more divinely you.

Memory eludes me as to when I came to possess seven *Old-fashioned Aphorisms* in the hand of W. J. Turner, for I knew him but slightly. Our first encounter, which was in the Savile Club, remains the clearest in mind, for it was not Popocatapetl or Schnabel he then extolled, it was another supremacy—hoyted Guinness. I choose one of the seven Aphorisms at random which shows he possessed less serious thoughts:

One man for a woman, one woman for man
Is Newton's ideal mathematical plan;
But when we demand which man for which woman
Relativity makes mathematics human.

Poetical collections by his fellow-"Georgian," Robert Nichols, lie alongside Turner's—the youthful *Invocation* (1915), the flowering *Ardours and Endurances* (1917) and the passionate *Aurelia* (1920). Their author on his return after a four years professorship—1921-1924—at the Imperial College, Tokyo, turned, for a time, to collaborating in plays and to criticism. In a MS. verse I believe unpublished, dated September 1925, he gives vent to his feelings at that time:

Triolet of Invocation

Despairing Soul, renew thy fire
Joyfully to give for Man thy all
Even as of old thou did'st desire.
Despairing Soul renew thy fire—
There is no heaven but to aspire
Nor hell save from that heaven to fall.
Despairing Soul, renew thy fire
Joyfully to give for Man thy all.

As I come upon F. R. Higgins' books, I am powerfully reminded of our last meetings in Dublin, during the Abbey Theatre Dramatic Festival of Plays and Lectures, August 6-20, 1938. On the morning following the first production of Yeats' *Purgatory*, Higgins was lecturing on Yeats in the Aberdeen Hall of the Gresham Hotel, only to be heckled persistently by a Boston Priest, the Rev. Father Connolly, to the very verge of rout, certainly to the doom of silence. Staving off reporters to aid his escape while

he fled to Yeats for advice was no easy matter. And, as we eventually emerged by a side way into O'Connell Street, it was to meet defeat—the newsboys were calling "Yeats Sensation". That night the grateful Higgins pressed a sheaf of typescripts into my hand; one, dated Bealtaine, 1927, I cannot trace in any of his volumes:

To M. J. MacManus
for his "Connacht Songs".

While sap runs out glad signals to the year
And every budded tree looks brave again,
In our far glens when cuckoos talk I hear
The calm of Egypt round a pulse of Spain.

That frail pulse, in the heart of ancient hills,
Revived rich promises to Aaron's race,
Until the far sands glowed with summer thrills
And pastures sang beneath God's dreaming face.

Have not our fathers heard that pulse of summer—
That cuckoo throb—when our own people fled
In herdless companies from those red horsemen,
Who clamped the stony waters with our bread.

And so in Connacht glens our gentle mothers,
Leaving ripe udders to unfriendly hands,
Could only cuddle white limbs reared in grasses
And dream on mouths from lost raspberry-lands.

O, friendly singer from those glens of sorrow,
Within your doors no race of boors we'll see,
But landless men, who bred a clan of nobles,
Gracing their lonely days with courtesy.

You sing their songs that have a ring of Spain;
But when we shut your book their shadows creep
From floor, from stool, and all is still again,
With crickets ticking out the time of sleep.

From a dead co-adjutor of Yeats to a dead collaborator of MacDiarmid is no journey in the seas of Celtic nationalisms. "Lewis Grassic Gibbon" (J. Leslie Mitchell) is probably best remembered now for his trilogy of novels, *Sunset Song* (1932), *Cloud Howe* (1933), and *Grey Granite* (1934), comprising *A Scots Quair*, and for *Spartacus* which stands out among the

many volmes he published under his own name. In 1934, shortly before his early death, he collaborated with MacDiarmid in *Scottish Scene*. About this time, since MacDiarmid was staying and also collaborating with me, Gibbon and I met frequently. One day he confided some sonnets to me, and we even began a collaboration on a long short story *Kamenis and Evelpis*, which after his death I completed and published.

The little tour of shelves is ended. It seems peculiarly fitting that the final verse, the sonnet representing Gibbon, should appear in the pages that first enshrined *The Old Vicarage, Granchester*, for it concerns its author:

Rupert Brooke

Far-seen beyond the hard Euboean strand,
A broken pearl upon the pulseless seas,
Sleeps Scyros, Lycomedes' sea-swept land,
Where Pyrrhus first looked o'er the Sporades.

And one lies there who lived, in greyer days,
His brief, love-dowered world in laughing-wise;
Who garnered wisdom through Youth's wilder ways
And sought the truth in all his Paradise.

And when the spray-washed sun to Rome imparts
A glamour rich as of her lordlier days,
The West Wind climbs the dusk: stands high: departs
Full nightward, there to hush the Scyrote bays

With aerial joyance of the Heart of Hearts,
And gold-throat music of mute Adonais.

DR. SITWELL AND SOME OTHERS

Façade, and other poems, 1920-1935, by Dr. Edith Sitwell, with an Introductory Essay by Jack Lindsay (Duckworth, 8s. 6d.).
Jacob and Thomas: Darkness, by Frank Kendon (Cambridge University Press, 2s. 6d.).
The Season's Pause, by W. J. Strachan (Secker & Warburg, 7s. 6d.).
The Wanderer, by John Evelyn (Home & Van Thal, 7s. 6d.).
Diamond Cut Diamond, by Ewart Milne (Bodley Head, 7s. 6d.).
Leaves in the Wind, by William McDermott (Gemini Pubns., Derby).
Celebration at Dark, by William Jay Smith (Hamish Hamilton, 6s.).
The Galaxies, by Ernest Miles (Fortune Press, 6s.).
Purple Testament, by Alfred Gordon Bennett (Fortune Press, 7s. 6d.).

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

Reading Dr. Edith Sitwell's *Façade*—a most welcome reissue of poems written between 1920 and 1935—I am reminded of a few personal associations with what is now generally admitted to be one of the glowing portents of twentieth-century poetry. In the first place, I had the perception to include several of her poems, including the haunting "Eventail" in my two anthologies, *A Miscellany of Poetry 1919* and *A Miscellany of Poetry 1920-1922*. Later on, I contributed two poems to the Fifth Cycle of *Wheels;* and my appearance in or on that particular band-waggon led the "Saturday Westminster" to describe me as "a clergyman in a circus". Still later, I parodied Miss Sitwell (as a critical exercise): and when, with the late Henry Poole, R.A., the Seymours gave an evening party in the mid-'twenties, we staged an elaborate burlesque of *Façade* to which Henry contributed the painted screen and megaphone and myself the parodies. Among our guests were Nigel Playfair and A. P. Herbert, and I remember that Sir Nigel talked of transferring our burlesque to his revue at the Lyric, Hammersmith, but the perpetrators were concerned only with the passing entertainment of their guests and in this, I am glad to think, we succeeded. And now, with one of those parodies running through my head:

Elise, Elise
Wore through her knees
Shinning up the hips
Of mulberry trees.
So keen and clean
Was her shinning
That the sinning
And preposterous Rural Dean
Said, 'I aver,
I'm proud of her . . .'

I again fall to reading Edith Sitwell's:

> Jane, Jane,
> Tall as a crane,
> The morning light creaks down again;

and just as delightedly as I did in those exciting post-First-War days.

Mr. Jack Lindsay contributes a brilliant rhetorico-critical Introductory Essay to *Façade*, aiming apparently to place these early poems of Dr. Sitwell's as the chief event in poetry since the Romantic Revival and their author as "the first fully *English* writer since Dickens". Tennyson is accused of "betrayal" of the Romantic Movement, of a "melodious falsification of the issues", and, with the other Victorians, of killing off the equivalent of French Symbolism which only "reappeared in Edith Sitwell, at a white-hot intensity." This is all very well, but, while welcoming Dr. Sitwell's splendid personal appearance in the pageant of English poetry, some of us hold the opinion that the nineteenth century saw what is probably the greatest and most sustained output of the poetic imagination since the days of Queen Elizabeth. And, as to Mr. Lindsay's judgment of Dr. Sitwell in her early poetry as "the first fully *English* writer since Dickens," is he really prepared to sweep aside Browning, Emily Brontë, Matthew Arnold, Meredith, Christina Rossetti (was not "Goblin Market" some kind of precursor of Edith Sitwell's "The Sleeping Beauty"?) Thomas Hardy, Hopkins and Bridges? Admit that the French Symbolists from Baudelaire to Rimbaud influenced our author, but does this make her work more *English* than "Ulysses", the best of "In Memoriam", "Men and Women", "Love in the Valley", and "The Darkling Thrush" —or am I a Dutchman?

To take up Mr. Lindsay means using space that Dr. Sitwell's poetry should have; but this exciting early poetry in "The Sleeping Beauty", "Façade", "Bucolic Comedies", and the quite unprecedented dark music and social criticism of "Gold Coast Customs" is now so well known that, like good wine, it needs no bush. But the book that contains these significantly original and lovely poems should be widely read.

To turn from this "lyric vivacity" to Mr. Frank Kendon's slender dialogue, *Jacob and Thomas: Darkness*, is like stepping from a garden of pomegranates into a shadowed inner chamber. It takes place in an Eastern house, between two old men sitting in darkness, one of whom was the rich young man who, forty years before, had asked Christ the "bargaining question", "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" and all these years he had found his good works insufficient and life an intolerable burden and delay. The poem is sparely and beautifully wrought.

Mr. W. J. Strachan is an accomplished craftsman with an eye for form and colour, and with an economy of means matching his somewhat tenuous inspiration. In his lyric observation of the countryside he is

excellent, but my own choice for entertainment in *The Season's Pause* would be the "potted" biography, "Verlaine":

> Born a hundred years ago in Metz,
> Died debauched and half out of his wits—
> Absinthe, family quarrels intervene—*etc.*

which opens up possibilities in peptonising our betters.

Nothing is owed to modernist influence in Mr. John Evelyn's *The Wanderer*, a collection of fifty mainly lyrical poems proceeding out of a mind evidently deeply imbued with traditional poetic language, form and subject matter. Swinburnian cadences reappear fairly frequently in these poems, and it is almost frightening to think how far we have travelled since that molten and luscious music set all England talking and squabbling. But here, at any rate, is the bearer of a name famous in diaristic prose singing:

> The high months and the high stars wane and grieve;
> Bright is the robe of life a man shall weave;
> He shall be young betwixt the night and eve,
> He shall be old before life's withered May.

Mr. Ewart Milne takes a more individual yet popular road to Parnassus—about which elevation he writes in one of these poems in *Diamond Cut Diamond*. He shows off his pilgrim paces in this selection from five previous volumes, with some new poems added; and the whole representative effect is to show what a broth of a bard he is. He uses a variety of metres, even Elizabethan pattern-shapes, to launch jibe and satire, nostalgic lyric and conversation piece, and all with a self-conscious Irish jollity and abandon. Pieces like "A Ballad for a Poor Girl" and "High, Wide and Handsome" have a galloping quality that is refreshing in an age of poetic hesitation and doubt.

A promising sheaf of verse comes in *Leaves in the Wind* by Mr. William McDermott. He has energy and awareness of the life around him and can contrive with equal zest a water-colour of a trout "slicing along in the stream" and a rather wastelandish etching of Sunday in a provincial town:

> Thriving in the desolation of closed shops,
> Driving into the morning with sandals
> Clacking on the pavements.

I had heard of the American Mr. William Jay Smith's poetry and when I opened his *Celebration at Dark* and read the line "And green as a grasshopper's leg is the evening sky", in a poem about a Persian miniature, I had an immediate welcoming response. Mr. Smith is a poet of quite

remarkable accomplishment: he has a short breath-length, but he uses it memorably to arrest the flying moment of observation and inspiration. He takes a theme "Marine" and immediately enters into a world of wonder:

> A boat is cutting into the sea
> And children all cry, Look.
> Earth and air are closing in
> Like the pages of a book.
>
> Down comes the wave, up goes the gull,
> Out goes the fisherman's hook;
> Earth and air are closing in
> Like the pages of a book.

And there is the same sure touch in all these poems, fanciful, decorative, realistic and frankly metrical:

> Time after time after time comes El Tiempo,
> Galloping on upon the prairie, time
> After time after time after time at a terrible tempo,
> Galloping on to the end, he ends in time.

Mr. Ernest Miles's new volume, *The Galaxies,* also shows considerable poetic dexterity amounting frequently to real distinction, as in "Adam: The Years of Grace":

> I am possessed with sunlight, blest by noon;
> Immeasurable silence burns and sings
> Behind the veils of thought, and bell-like brings
> A Presence to this garden. Light, a spectral moon,
> Turns quietly to compass clouds and spires,
> Counties ablaze beneath their wind-shorn skies—
> A world in glory that unflames, and dies,
> And leaves me Caesar still, with Death and my Desires.

Mr. Miles's unsolved problem is that of hundreds of similarly-equipped and reverently perceptive poets: how to wrest from the burning heart of experience the unforgettable moment and give it immortal expression.

There is plenty of human experience in Mr. Alfred Gordon Bennett's second collection of poems, *Purple Testament,* and here again the verse is deftly and surely turned, with much in the nature of journalistic commentary on the effects of air-raids, on German prison-camps, gas-gangrene wards in the Pacific, Jew-baiting and so forth. The author's mind is obviously eager and sensitive and compassionate, but having many blind spots and warm prejudices—all which contribute to the general pleasing effect of a collection of impulsive verse.

ROSE-COLOURED GOBLETS

Ten Key Poets—Fore Publications (1s. each).

1. Edith Sitwell: "Poor Men's Music."
2. George Barker: "The True Confession of George Barker."
3. Randall Swingler: "The God in the Cave."
4. Jonathan Denwood: "Twinter's Wedding."
5. Stanley Snaith: "The Common Festival."
6. Dorian Cooke: "Fugue for our Time."
7. Jack Lindsay: "Three Letters to Nikolai Tikhonov."
8. Maurice Carpenter: "Gentle Exercise."
9. Jack Beeching: "Aspects of Love."
10. Norman Cameron: "Forgive Me, Sire."

Reviewed by P. D. CUMMINS

Poetry, we are told, is in dire peril. Publishers shy away from it because the public will not or cannot afford to buy it; while those periodicals which still maintain an interest in it are pitifully few in number. Now while the times are actually no worse than they ever were for poetry, a crusading spirit is abroad. "Save the poets!" the cry goes forth, and accordingly Fore Publications have rallied to the call with their pink-covered shilling series of Key Poets whose aim is "to break down the barriers between poet and audience, and give poetry a chance to rediscover itself as activity".

The trouble is, of course, that while the public can be led to the Pierian Springs, it will not necessarily be induced to drink; such curious elements have, in fact, mingled with those once crystalline waters that its reluctance is understandable. Fore Publications, however, proffer the contents of their rose-coloured goblets for so small a sum that the public should at least sample them and return for further draughts of the liquid that is to its taste.

It is a happy omen that the first of the decade of Key Poets should be Dr. Edith Sitwell. "Poor Men's Music" contains five poems which continue the series that began with the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The agony of pity, the passionate rage against insensate destruction that emerge from the dazzling symbolism of these poems evoke an immediate response, both intellectual and emotional. Edith Sitwell, however, has not limited herself merely to clashing the cymbals of terror. While she envisages the catastrophe, she knows that there is hope; man cannot utterly destroy himself or be destroyed:

"And still the uncombatable song rose to the light

From all the heights of Being, and from the depth of the last abyss:

> "If every grain of my dust should be a Satan,—
> If every atom of my heart were Lucifer—
> If every drop of my blood were an Abaddon
> —Yet should I love."

Only through love is man's continuance possible. It has never been more finely stated than it is here by this unique poet.

From the heights we descend to the depths. "The True Confession of George Barker" is a conducted tour at crazy speed through Mr. Barker's own particular hell. It is as if, having seen his inmost self with loathing and revulsion, he has proceeded to create, out of an immense nausea, a thousand world images in his own image. These are fearfully, turbulently, bawdily alive, Circean monsters of the senses that can, nevertheless—and this immeasurably increases the horror—speak with the tongue of angels. Here is an *âme damnée* that records its damnation with infinite gusto and the vast orchestral effects of a Berlioz.

The cool traditionalism of Randall Swingler acts like water on these flames. "The God in the Cave" consists of two sequences, of which the first, "Lazarus", deals with man's attempt to achieve the "break-through", while the second: "Reflections on the Wall of a Palaeolithic Cave" centres round his struggle to drive out the death-wish. In these thoughtful, sensitively-conceived poems, Mr. Swingler ultimately finds an answer to his own question: "How will man ever expiate the guilt of being alive?"

My most grateful thanks to Fore Publications for having introduced me to a poet hitherto unknown to me: Jonathan Denwood. Mr. Denwood writes in Cumbrian dialect, but please, please don't let this deter you from being a guest at "Twinter's Wedding". Take your place at the feast, help yourself to as much ale as you can drink, raise your voice in song and forget austerity for an hour or so at this most heart-warming, rowdy and sociable of country nuptials. A "Denwood Night" should instantly be inaugurated in Cumberland.

Again, we have a complete contrast in "The Common Festival" by Stanley Snaith. Mr. Snaith is a very good poet indeed, and one who writes with complete integrity, as well as with rare delicacy and restraint. There are many perfect lyrics in this collection, and I rail at the restriction of space which will not allow me to quote any of them in full.

Dorian Cooke has matured greatly since his Apocalyptic days. He has, I feel, realised that a good poet does not need to affect the mannerisms which label him as belonging to this or that school; it suffices to be himself. "Fugue for our Time" is a condemnation of the post-war world by one who, having fought to save it, has returned to reap its bitter harvest. It is true, as Mr. Cooke finely says that:

"The time is too old
For meditation down the morning stairs
Or a flush of anger on the evening step.
The past does not return. New worlds enfold
Darkness and light and all the middle airs.
The time has passed when scourings should escape
The sweep of huge, stored anger in human shape."

Like Edith Sitwell, he can move us to anger and pity, but, unlike her, he cannot as yet offer us the unconquerable hope.

Dorian Cooke anticipates the catastrophe; Jack Lindsay, however, maintains that it can be averted. In "Three Letters to Nikolai Tikhonov," written with the vigour and enthusiasm which are his hall-marks, Mr. Lindsay outlines to the Russian poet his testament of faith: the power of the people to save the world and themselves from destruction. I myself find him more convincing, more moving, when he is dealing with a similar theme in prose, but this is probably because, for full appreciation, his free verse, with its tremendous drive, requires to be read aloud rather than to oneself.

Maurice Carpenter is difficult going, chiefly because he gives the impression of having sacrificed spontaneity to achieve his effects. As a result, his work lacks flexibility and rarely makes any emotional impact upon the reader. This is all the more to be regretted since he has much that is worth-while to say, and which he will say again ten times more convincingly if he does not disdain to strike the common chord.

I found Jack Beeching too reminiscent of other people's waste-lands.

His necrophily is all the more to be deplored when he can write as beautifully as this:

"Dancing like sunburnt daisies
In summer's angry day
Delight flares in their faces.
Five children at their play
Are sweet as tips of clover
In green and fervent hay.
Their dancing feet discover
The secret, sunlit places
Where passion struck the lover.
But unconcerned as daisies
The sun illuminates
The heedless, lucid faces."

I must apologise to Norman Cameron for having no more than a couple of lines left for his *Forgive Me, Sire*. I can only hope that *he* will forgive *me* when I say how much I enjoyed his endearing verses.

POETRY IN AUSTRALASIA

10. THE SUMMING UP (i.)

PHILIP LINDSAY

This series must soon end. It has crowded out so many articles that I must curb my enthusiasm, although there are numerous poets singing for their places. Of these, excellent though some of them are, I can make only brief mention, and it is best for the poets to speak for themselves. Particularly do I regret having to hurry with William Hart-Smith whose sequence on Columbus—carrying on the tradition begun by Slessor—sets lyric beside lyric, varying the rhythms to the mood or theme, while telling the adventures of that great explorer. Here is his description of *The Surrender of the Moors at Granada:*

And now the keys of red Granada come
clanking at the belt of Boabdil. His cortège winds
upward from the city, the last city,
the red city in the valley.

Billow the white robes of the Moors,
and the rhythm of the riders slow,
a tired rhythm. These are defeated men.

Granada, the last city, painted Granada.
Against the sky the mighty wall
of mountains; but highest of all
the golden cross that soars above Alhambra.

Folded into folds the purple mountains
with their white embroideries of snow.
Folded into folds the emblems of our banners.

Pricked from the forefront of the waiting host
two horses to the summit of the hill.
And the slope is ten long years, the reining-in
the moment of accomplishment, and joy.

Turning, she kissed him full upon the lips,
and they were one again,
both crying tears . . .

Boabdil comes to kneel before these two,

the man and woman together, body and soul,
deed and inspiration of these wars,
these holy wars within our own frontiers.

Having opened this small book, *Christopher Columbus* (The Caxton Press, Christchurch, N.Z.), 1948, I find my resolutions weaken. Two poems, at least, must be quoted to show how Hart-Smith, working on each cameo, uses a different tool for every mood, as in this *Cipangu:*

Elbows in wine-slops, news of the ocean isles
they tell in taverns under a stinking lamp.

Madre de Dios, here is evidence!

And once a swollen corpse, a woman's,
naked, tattooed, face-down in a scum
of jelly-fish and weed . . .

And bits of wood to Santo sometimes come,
most strangely carved.

The woman drowned, they say, had almond eyes.
Masters, a ship, a ship, for my youth dies!

From the taut yet colourful simplicity of Hart-Smith, it is into a different world we turn when we open the works of Dame Mary Gilmore. She is of the older school, having been born in 1865—Hart-Smith was born in 1911—and she has written so many verses over the years that it is perhaps inevitable that some of them have fallen below the high standard of her best, while there are occasions when her dragging in of a crude rhyme makes the reader flinch. It is, however, unfair to judge a poet by her weaknesses—and should we do so, Dame Mary would have good company in the dock beside her—and we must look at her only when she reaches her finest. In her best work there is a noble simplicity, an ease of manner that deceives one at times into under-estimating it, lulled—as, alas, one often is—by her impatience, willy nilly, rhyme or no accursed rhyme, to finish the verse. Yet, as this dedicatory poem to her father in her *Selected Verse* (Angus and Robertson), 1948, shows plainly, she can at times write perfectly:

I have known many men, and many men
In the quick balance of the mind have weighed,
And even as Abram found his score was ten,
His ten was one, so was my hope betrayed.
But though the tale is told, and fallen spent
Is the first fiction of a great man's name,

Eminent among the uneminent
He still stands tall; a lonely mark for fame.
So, too, where truth sweeps out time's dusty floor
I have seen names, long praised, flung out as naught;
And I have seen one, whom the world called poor,
Walking amid the mountains of his thought.

This proud mood, however, is not typical of Dame Mary. Passing over her elegaic war-poems—almost unequalled amongst the war-poems written during 1914-18—I would like to quote her *Eve Song* as being closer to her usual spirit:

I span and Eve span
A thread to bind the heart of man;
But the heart of man was a wandering thing
That came and went with little to bring:
Nothing he minded what we made
As here he loitered, and there he stayed.

I span and Eve span
A thread to bind the heart of man;
But the more we span the more we found
It wasn't his heart but ours we bound!
For children gathered about our knees:
The thread was a chain that stole our ease.
And one of us learned in our children's eyes
That more than man was love and prize.
But deep in the heart of one of us lay
A root of loss and hidden dismay.

He said he was strong. He had no strength
But that which comes of breadth and length.
He said he was fond. But his fondness proved
The flame of an hour when he was moved.
He said he was true. His truth was but
A door that winds could open and shut.

And yet, and yet, as he came back,
Wandering in from the outward track
We held our arms, and gave him our breast
As a pillowing place for his head to rest.
I span and Eve span,
A thread to bind the heart of man!

I had intended to include more than two poets in this penultimate essay, but the others must be packed into a final summary. And before I

close, I feel I must quote if only a few verses from Dame Mary's *Swans at Night:*

Within the night, above the dark,
I heard a host upon the air—
Upon the air they made no mark,
For all that they went sailing there.

And from that host there came a cry,
A note of calling strange and high;
I heard it blown against the sky,
Till naught there seemed but it and I.

A long and lonely wraith of sound,
It floated out in distance wide,
As though it knew another bound,
A space wherein it never died.

I heard the swans, I heard the swans,
I heard the swans that speed by night;
That ever, where the starlight wans,
Fly on unseen within the height.

I never knew how wide the dark,
I never knew the depth of space,
I never knew how frail a bark—
A speck—is man within his place,

Not till I heard the swans go by,
Not till I marked their haunting cry,
Not till within the vague, on high,
I watched them pass across the sky . . .

We have heard her in three moods: in the high mood of reverence for her father; in the troubled yet happy submission of the wife and mother; and as the worshipper of birds and nature's other mysteries. And these three moods persist throughout her work which—in the finest meaning of the words—remains a woman's poetry: brave, noble, tragic and pathetic, upheld by a sense of duty and a love of her country and of all birds and beasts, such as the white swan in a flight of black swans and her black cock whose

. . . clarion went so far
It seemed as though he called the moon,
Or cried upon a star.

SHORT REVIEWS

John Skelton. A Selection from his Poems. Edited with an Introduction by Vivian de Sola Pinto, M.A., D.Phil. (Sidgwick and Jackson, 6s.)

Poems by Christopher Smart. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Robert Brittain. (Princeton University Press, 25s.)

Selected Poems of John Clare. Edited with an Introduction by Geoffrey Grigson. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.)

However much we may deplore the disruptive tendencies of our times and the widespread uncertainty of taste, it must be admitted that some good has been done. In their search throughout the centuries of English literature for what was unusual and is still unfamiliar, poets have succeeded in rescuing much that has been neglected. Skelton, Christopher Smart and John Clare have all been re-discovered in recent years with much enthusiasm and, in consequence, academic criticism has been stimulated. The audacious tumbling measures of Skelton have influenced Robert Graves, W. H. Auden and other writers, and the Tudor poet is no longer regarded with indifference or contempt. But Professor de Sola Pinto, in his foreword to this brief selection, is too anxious, we think, to stress the appeal of Skelton in our century. Truth to tell, the Skeltonic measure is too limited in its effect for our ear and his influence on modern writers does not amount to much: it is best, perhaps, to enjoy his work for its own sake and to imagine ourselves back at the court of Henry VIII. We can be amused by the homely, downright manner of this poet laureate and appreciate his flabbergasting compliments—

> By Saint Mary, my lady,
> Your mammy and your daddy
> Brought forth a goodly baby!

but we can scarcely return whole-heartedly to such simplicities. Professor de Sola Pinto has modernised the text discreetly and the notes on obscure words at the end of each page save the reader a lot of trouble. Our only complaint is that some of the extracts are too short. *The Tunning of Elinour Rumming*, for example, depends for much of its grotesque humour on its total speed and, when we are given only a few extracts as here, we miss the energetic drive of all its banter.

Christopher Smart's masterpiece, *A Song to David*, was known, of course, to Robert Browning and other poets of the Victorian age, but it is only within our own time that the startling talent of this eighteenth-century poet has been widely recognised. In this critical edition, which comes from America, a considerable number of poems are printed for the first time since their original publication, and Mr. Robert Brittain has written copious notes on them. In a searching preface, which is full of new detail

and minor discovery, he disperses the lingering legend that Smart was a suddenly inspired madman. The famous Song was written some time after Smart had recovered from his first attack of religious mania and Mr. Brittain shows that the poet wrote as an artist seeking deliberate effects of style. His use of parallelism came, of course, from the Bible, but, in his paraphrases of the Psalms, Smart had already practised that device. Furthermore, in his life-long devotion to the work of Horace, he had paid particular attention to the *curiosa felicitas* and strove to imitate them. We can trace, therefore, in the poems which have been reprinted in this book those qualities which give so remarkable an effect to *A Song to David*. In his enthusiasm, however, Mr. Brittain is inclined to overrate the value of Smart's lesser work. There is little in it that can be regarded as in any way remarkable and, after reading it, we are left with the impression that the legend surrounding his solitary masterpiece has some truth in it. The anguish and mental horror which preceded the composition of the poem seem to have given to it that fusing energy and impassioned movement which it still holds for us.

The name of John Clare is now secure from neglect, thanks to the zeal of Edmund Blunden and other poets. This new careful selection from his poems, which has been made by Mr. Geoffrey Grigson, adds another pleasant volume to the new Muses' Library. Mr. Grigson has given us two excellent and diverse anthologies, *The Romantics* and *Before the Romantics*, but we get the impression from his preface to Clare's poems that he has no real interest in the living world of nature. We feel that he prefers to find birds, plants and hedgerows in books rather than in the open air. He tells us, somewhat coldly, that in a scene mediocre in itself, Clare accomplished his business of learning nature by heart, as a child and as a young labourer. He adds, "No 'nature poet', if such an imagined phenomenon has ever appeared, can have been more than one of the lesser poets. He scarcely helps us to understand the mind of Clare by telling us that civilized men in the early decades of the last century were in, "so to say, a schizophrenic period of history, from which they have not yet emerged." This is the kind of pedantry which withers flower, leaf, and the few pleasures of existence.

AUSTIN CLARKE.

Anthology for Verse Speakers compiled by E. Guy Pertwee (Samuel French, 7s. 6d.).

Swinburne: Selected Poems arranged with an introduction by Humphrey Hare (Heinemann, 12s. 6d.).

John Dryden: Selected Poems edited by Geoffrey Grigson (Crown Classics: Grey Walls Press, 3s. 6d.).

John Gay: Selected Poems edited by Alan Ross (Crown Classics: Grey Walls Press, 3s. 6d.).

A few weeks ago, when congratulating a young lady on her very fine delivery of a certain contemporary poem to a clearly appreciative public audience, I was somewhat surprised to receive the self-deprecating reply: "But I'm afraid, to this day I don't know what it means". Which, as I told her, was patent nonsense: for nobody could have given so sensitive and moving an interpretation of a poem which had not been profoundly, if intuitively, understood. What she meant, I imagine, was that she was unable to render down the thought-content of the poem into a formal and logical definition. Had she been able to do so, she would either have proved the invalidity of the poem, or destroyed all its effective value. Would there be any "meaning" left at all to Shakespeare's "Full Fathom Five", without the enchantment of its music?

I agree with Herbert Palmer when he says, in the introduction to Mr. Pertwee's anthology, that "if a poem fails the oral test it fails to justify its existence and is no poem at all". The solitary reading of poetry from the printed page is like the reading of a musical score; which can be studied either to enhance subsequent enjoyment of performance, or to recreate imaginatively the conditions of performance. For poetry, like music, only fully lives in performance.

But it is a sad fact that the proliferation of the printed word, in particular the visual tricks used in newspaper headlines and multi-coloured advertising display types, which blur and stun the urban dweller's senses in almost every moment of his waking life, has dulled the capacity to appreciate the expressive tones of language. The flattened inflections of B.B.C. announcers as well as the clipped monotony of ordinary conversation are further evidence of this. Poets, in a quite literal sense, have lost the ear of the public. And the public has lost its ear for poetry.

So that it seems to me the real importance of Mr. Pertwee's anthology, which on the face of it appears not startlingly different from any other selected "Treasury" of English verse, lies in the affirmation of the title. People like Mr. Pertwee are perhaps doing more than anybody at the present to substantiate poetry as the living essence of language, the singing voice which must be heard to be understood or believed.

Criticism of such a compilation as this, is likely to be useless both to the anthologist and to readers, and little more than an opportunity for the reviewer to indulge his own vanity. "Had I been editing this anthology, I would have left out these and put in those." That is not criticism but a comparison of personal tastes. In this case, anyway, the selection has been made not simply on the basis of personal preference, but as the result of considerable experience in verse-speaking and teaching. One or two reflections do, however, rise in the mind for what they are worth. In his very wide and catholic range, Mr. Pertwee has given very

generous representation to living poets, so that we can see them rubbing shoulders (the order is alphabetical) with Drayton, Donne, Coleridge, Keats. It cannot be said that they stand the test very well. In particular, how poorly the poets of the Second World War compare, for instance, with those of the First! The reasons for this would be the subject for a long essay, and perhaps have a little to do with what was said at the beginning of this review. But there it is, at any rate so far as the representation in this anthology goes.

One last point: in regard to traditional poems such as "The Wraggle-Taggle Gypsies" and "The Lyke-Wake Dirge", I feel they are so closely associated with a musical accompaniment that they lose by the lack of it, whereas Cowper's magnificent "God moves in a mysterious way", regains its full poetic grandeur by being lifted out of the dreariness of the Hymnal. As is to be expected, many leading members of the Poetry Society and contributors to *The Poetry Review* are worthily represented in this anthology, notably the President, Mr. T. W. Ramsey, John Gawsworth, Roy Campbell and W. Kean Seymour.

Turning to the other selections here under review, it immediately strikes one with slight surprise to realise that there was no line of Dryden's included in Mr. Pertwee's anthology. Whether as a result of Mr. Eliot's chill appreciation, or for whatever other reason, there is no doubt that interest in Dryden, "the most masculine of our poets" as Hopkins called him, has waned extraordinarily in our day. Is it true that he remains primarily "a poets' poet"? Certainly his plays now have more "literary" than dramatic interest, and his works generally are such as lend themselves advantageously to selection of their scattered excellences. But I think Mr. Grigson, in spite of his admirably perspicacious introductory essay, has underlined this exclusive attitude to Dryden by the representation included in his little book. Here are the famous passages from the satires, certainly, and the beautiful translation from Lucretius ; but for the rest a few songs, translations from Horace, and prologues to his own, and other people's, plays, lesser known and interesting at a time when the main body of Dryden's work is familiar reading, but not adequate to reawake the proper appreciation of one of the supreme masters of poetic language.

For John Gay, on the other hand, the scope of these very pleasant little Crown Classics seems exactly right. His claim to immortality rests securely in that incomparable operatic phenomenon "The Beggar's Opera", and to a lesser degree in its successor "Polly". As a figure in literary history it is by his weaknesses, those weaknesses that endeared him to his devoted friends Pope and Swift, that he exerts a fascination upon us. It is well to have these examples of his facile exercise of fashionable gifts to fill in the picture.

About Swinburne there must still be controversy of some vehemence.

For myself I must confess that a similar representation of his lyric verse to that accorded to Gay would be sufficient. Swinburne the literary scholar, with his marvellous intuitions, deserves a great deal more attention than he usually gets to-day. And Swinburne the dramatic poet, who never quite succeeded in commanding his great dramatic power, is still to be given his due. But Swinburne the intoxicated siren of the drawing-rooms, the gypsy violinist of language, can resuscitate no fervour in me, even with all the Freudian scaffolding Mr. Hare can erect, or the lovely word "algolaguia" to infuse it all. Over-endorsed with an ear for lulling vowel-music, but anaesthetised against the hard consonants of experience, the subjective Swinburne was too easily satisfied with

> "... ah the wondering watery sighs
> That the sea makes round Lesbian promontories."

Mr. Hare asserts that it is impossible to "cut" from a poem by Swinburne. On the contrary, it's my belief that selected stanzas from "Hertha", from the magnificently inappropriate "Ave atque Vale" for Baudelaire, from the "Forsaken Garden" and some of the "Songs before Sunrise", give a better impression of the marvellous poet who nested somewhere in Swinburne, than a selection thrown wide enough to drag up that senile fragment "A Baby". Nevertheless I know many would violently contest this view, and for them Mr. Humphrey Hare's selection contains everything it was possible to retain from Swinburne's mature poetic life. His introduction contains a reiteration of the view which has become famous from Mr. Hare's recent "Life".

RANDALL SWINGLER.

The Voice of Poetry, 1930-50. An anthology edited by Hermann Peschmann. (Evans Brothers, 8s. 6d.)

Hermann Peschmann commences the preface to his anthology with this paragraph: "There are at least two good reasons, in an anthology of contemporary verse, for choosing 1930 as a commencing date. It was the opening year of a decade distinguished by a particular type of poetry; and it was the publication year of one of its most influential volumes, the *Poems* of W. H. Auden, its acknowledged leader and by far the most important poet of the new group." But is all that quite true? And, if true, is it an advantage? At any rate the buying public has grown to dislike the "particular type of poetry" of the last two decades, and most of the poets in the anthology will emphatically deny that their verse has been influenced by Auden.

The book claims to include of the older poets only those who made their reputations from 1930 onwards. But it is captious and inconsistent,

for so many of its inmates made their reputations before 1930, some of them long before 1930—for instance, Laurence Binyon, Roy Campbell, Richard Church, Walter de la Mare, Robert Graves, F. R. Higgins, Oliver St. John Gogarty, T. S. Eliot, Victoria Sackville-West, Edith Sitwell, Osbert Sitwell, W. J. Turner, Dorothy Wellesley, W. B. Yeats—though their reputations were not always above reproach. If the new poetry is so new and so important why not stick to that and nothing else (I notice that quite a number of the newcomers have traditional voices) and include of the older poets only those who have been chiefly instrumental in bringing the new poetry into being, its parents or whatever you like to call them. By the canons of all intelligent criticism these are chiefly T. S. Eliot, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Ezra Pound, though Eliot and Pound are U.S.-born and Hopkins has been for a long time in the churchyard. A later influence, but preceding Auden, and influencing Auden is Robert Graves, though he made an early reputation as a "Georgian." Another poet who is also prominent in Marsh's Georgian anthologies is W. J. Turner, who between the years 1916-26 made so much stir that he became something of a lyrical and dictatorial nuisance, and was one of the group—Sir John Squire, Edward Shanks, John Freeman, W. J. Turner—that Robert Lynd derisively nicknamed "The Squirearchy". Another Georgian poet, and one who won the Hawthornden prize for some beautiful but very traditional pastoral verse, is Victoria Sackville-West; and I cannot see that her voice has much changed. But the wind blows still colder, for De la Mare has always been an outstanding Georgian and was one of Harold Monro's and Edward Marsh's biggest finds. Binyon made his reputation at the beginning of this century and became something of an influence on the Georgians (compare, for instance, the diction of Binyon and John Freeman). Binyon, Gogarty, De la Mare and W. B. Yeats are all represented in Q's revised edition of *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, whose closing date was 1918. As a result of these inconsistencies many of the younger poets in Mr. Peschmann's anthology do not get enough space. And there are too many omissions.

Moreover, the preface contains too many wrong or misleading statements—for instance "that the central experience of this new poetry" is "classical", when it is just the reverse; and that it is often characterised by "a widening reaffirmation of Christian ideals of conduct and belief" which is not only not true but obliquely repudiates the strong Christian poetry of Chesterton, Bridges and the early Masefield (to say nothing of my own) who, of course, are not included. It is a great pity that an anthology which contains so many good poems has not a better aspect of scholarship and consistency and is so captious in its behaviour.

HERBERT PALMER.

The Unreturning Spring, by James Farrar, edited and introduced by Henry Williamson (Williams and Norgate, 15s.).

These 242 pages are the concentrated essence of a young life, self-devoted to the craft of writing and caught up by the last war, to fall on active service in a Mosquito aircraft three months before its twenty-first birthday. It was fitting that Mr. Williamson should be charged with the arrangement of these poems, sketches, stories and letters for, although unknown to their author, he was the modern writer of his dreams, to whom he most constantly recurred when faced with his literary ideal. He cannot indeed see a dead otter without at once thinking of *Tarka*. The admiration was an early one and he retained it till the end. Anyone interested in the development of a *character* will read this book eagerly, quite apart from asking himself if it represents a considerable English writer in a chrysalis, as it were. One thing emerges with absolute clarity: James Farrar was and would always have remained an observer. It is also clear that the materialistic aspect of nature and scenes of blood connected with her quite early impressed his mind. The first poem printed here, "Night Song", addresses the swift thus:

> Wherefore risest thou, pellet of flesh, sootied filaments, to the stars,
> Which men aspire to, and attain not?

It is followed by a vivid description of ratting in Cornwall very much more violent than that of the same operation in the Hampshire of *Vanity Fair*. There is no nonsense about this young man; he means to make his way and take stock of everything he sees in the natural and human scene. He makes no secret of his affection for the music of Delius and he shows genuine musical instinct when registering the exact tones of common speech, e.g., "Cord", not "Gawd", for "God", and "Stannat hice" for "Stand at ease".

Before summer 1940 he has noted, as Coleridge might have done, the cuckoo's behaviour in spring. In August he writes, "Antares, wherefore art thou white—or nearly white? I think I shall have to investigate this phenomenon, which is probably the result of blackout conditions." Before December, 1941 we get "Patriotism cannot, thank God, be instilled into flowers." In February, 1942, though he writes, "There is no God for me, no idolatry of self-excusal", he adds, "At times I perceive clearly a spirit behind the sun" and a little later, in his rapture on Delius' music, he can yet call him "that wracked egocentric genius". A little later, he can produce, in a sonnet, a line as lovely as "Strange, the unpatterned riot of these years", and a poem, "The Beloved", which surely will be anthologized.

His comment on this achievement (p. 107) is that though the lover is Night in self-effacement, the poem is better regarded as dealing with Day and Night in themselves, "not as a conventional love-poem with the two

characters disguised". He is saying, that is, that the thing is a myth (not an allegory), as all true poems are. About the same time he can observe "Has the female soul, in its pristine state, any real code of behaviour, any principles, any uniformity of reaction; or is it really an unchained thing, a beautiful and unreasonable butterfly fluttering from night to day, from mood to mood, from the Amazon orchid to the English daisy, as the wind wills?" Early he seems to have made the discovery that he could and must live in two worlds, the public extrovert one, with what F. H. Bradley called "our station and its duties", and the private introvert one of fancy and dream, to which there was for him ever an entrance through observation. He does not, like so many youthful geniuses (one might even instance Chatterton and Rimbaud, and perhaps Ducasse, whose style the prose-piece "Pale blue Windows" distantly resembles) come a cropper between the two worlds, and why? Thanks to his interest in nature. He never lets the dream get ahead of the business, rather the reverse: the diary entries show, with his advance in the R.A.F., the business decidedly getting ahead of the dream. The terms "wizard" and "types" recur with painful monotony in the latter pages, and he can pass through a city so brimful of antiquity as Norwich without apparently seeing more in it than "rather a dingy place". In fact, the outward armour of the completely assured Service *arriviste* is sprucely evident by p. 162 with its entry, "If you get in with an old-timer who has struggled for about ten years to achieve what we possibly can in about one, it is liable to be resented." I imagine Sidney Keyes to have been a little like that. But the Keatsian cry "I must acquire knowledge" is paramount and ubiquitous, and never more vivid than in the extraordinary document (pp. 87-89) headed "White Paper". This *schwergefasste Entschluss*, enunciated after lying on the Downs one month before his nineteenth birthday, concludes: "The vital point is that I *must* walk in every sphere, some of the ways of which compare unfavourably with a tightrope. Therefore must I look to my equilibrium. Harmony of the mental and physical planes, eventual experience of all human joys and sorrows, without warping excess in any, must be welded to form my balancing-rod." A career so directed could never be a failure, even if destined not to know the terrible sense of spiritual isolation that perforce descends on talent early developed once a woman has started to "take an interest" in it. If I have not particularized the specific qualities of the fictional matter in this book that, with the deceased's mother's co-operation, Mr. Williamson has so cunningly and thrillingly put together, it is because what has hit me in the face is the secret and determined realization of a life that shall be intensely personal and conventionally human by a heroic nature at so immature a stage. That is James Farrar's burden; it is also his mystery.

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I am invited to justify or to recant my criticisms of volumes of verse by Miss Editha Kelly and Mr. Daryl Klein. I choose to take the former course.

I believe the critic's duty, among other things, is to protect the public from false values. In my article on the "Fortunate Poets" I did this. But, as I am well aware, mediocre people do not like being exposed as such. They cannot bear it. Miss Kelly complains that if I had read the Foreword to her book I would have noticed that many of her poems have won awards and commendations, "and quite a number of them have been published in *The Poetry Review, Poetry of To-day* and other journals, surely a proof of their poetic merit." I did read the Foreword to her book. I did notice. I am not an Oscar Wilde and I do not as Miss Kelly seems to think, follow his example as a reviewer of books. That notable scoundrel said "I never read the books I review—it might prejudice me." I cannot accept these standards as the only "proof of poetic merit". I read her book and considered it very poor poetry indeed according to quite other standards.

Having accused me of not reading her book Miss Kelly attacks me for comparing (very unfavourably too) a poem of hers about a critic with one on the same subject by Mr. Ezra Pound. Perhaps I had better assure Miss Kelly that I have read the poem by Ezra Pound as well as her own! Miss Kelly writes "The comparison of this poem with one of Ezra Pound's (which I have not read) is distasteful to me. I do not write—and find no pleasure in reading—pretentious nonsense." May I suggest that Miss Kelly read Mr. Pound's poem? It is on p. 163 of *Selected Poems* by Ezra Pound in the Faber Library edition.

Miss Kelly is presumptuous enough to suggest that I took offence at the content of her poem. That is not so. I criticised it adversely because it lacked vitality and strength. I said nothing whatever about its contents. Twice then, Miss Kelly has falsified my approach, by her letter.

In answer to Mr. Daryl Klein's quite understandable objection to my remarks I must surely be allowed to make the distinction between the rootlessness of a whole poem and the occasional undigested influence in a short phrase of certain poets? I hope I did not give the impression that Mr. Klein's poem as a whole derived from anything in Milton or T. S. Eliot. Like Mr. Klein I do not consider that "influences" as such are of the "first critical importance" but I find that these little intrusions of an alien style on the one hand coupled with the *overall* lack of style on the other make it impossible to enjoy the writing *as poetry*.

To sum up, I must insist on the critic's right to treat without mercy poetry which is really poor in his opinion. Standards to-day are notoriously low and critics who are worth their salt should be insisting on amelioration of standards, not on complacent acceptance of the mediocre. I believe that far too much poetry is being printed to-day, in spite of continual assertions to the contrary. Every man and woman has poetry in him but only the very best should be published. Poetry was more popular in times when few people were educated and no one had ever heard of printing. The circulation of mss between circles of friends should be practised far more. If poetry is good it will "catch on" and eventually be published.

I am, etc.,
PETER RUSSELL.

Sir,

Marvin Magalaner's article on *The Poetry Bookshop* in your November-December issue is very interesting, and generally correct. But there is another side to it all. In the end, I think, Harold Monro succeeded more as a poet than as a critic and sponsor of other poets. He was a good earthy poet, but a captious, one-sided and superficial critic, and went out of his way to attack what he feared or did not understand. I got to know him rather well, and often attended the apple-loft poetry readings in Devonshire Street. But we could not hit it, and he stumbled against me badly at the very beginning—at the first glint of my nose. That was in 1913, before the first World-War, when I was living in Germany, an undergraduate and research student at Bonn. One of the professors, Dr. Imelmann, informed me one day that I had acquired an enemy—Harold Monro. (As time went on it turned out to be not only Harold Monro, but others of the Georgian Poets). My professor friend handed me a copy of Harold Monro's *Poetry and Drama* (September 1913) and there, set out in large type and occupying a third of a very large page, this is what in great bewilderment and astonishment I read:

> "We are in no fear of doing injustice to the poems by quotation (i.e., two lyrics by Stephen Southwold) for almost any other verses are as bad as these. "The Hurdy-Gurdy" by Herbert E. Palmer, in the same number, is surely also a disgrace to any periodical that purports to represent the best literature. We ourselves, we confess, have made mistakes, but none, we hope, as bad as those of the Editor of *The English Review* on this inauspicious occasion. We would remind *The English Review* of the public responsibility of its reputation, and would suggest that it would be better not to print any poetry at all than to approach a wavering public with verses which may disgust it into withdrawing its attention from the real poetry of modern England."

That "real poetry of modern England" strikes a high note. It was evidently *not* the poetry of Blake, Cowper, Longfellow, Felicia Hemans or Robert Browning. The first four of them quaver through the lines of Stephen Southwold's contributions, the last through my own poem. As I had not then published any book, had never met Monro, nor opposed him in any way, and made only a few appearances in the literary press, I could not understand it at all. Nor, I guess, could Stephen Southwold. But Monro was on the look-out for bad smells and potential anti-Georgians, and was determined to strike and fumigate in good time. His chief antipathies (partly as spokesman of the Georgians) were Browning, Tennyson, Kipling, Blake, Swinburne, Spenser, Scott, Cowper, Campbell, Newbolt, Longfellow, Felica Hemans. As regards Tennyson I believe I am right in saying that it was Harold Monro who *started* the hullabaloo against that much-loved Victorian. As regards Kipling, he wrote in his *Poetry and Drama* of September, 1913, "We greet and praise the selection of Robert Bridges (i.e., to the laureateship) . . . How appalling if the choice had fallen on Kipling." As regards some others, Monro wrote contemptuously of the tastes of "the average man" and cited this list of corrupters: "His knowledge of poetry begins and ends with examples of Campbell, Scott, Cowper, Mrs. Hemans, and other second-rate and third-rate poets of the nineteenth century which he had to learn by heart in the nursery."

No wonder that when Q brought his *Oxford Book of English Verse* up to armistice-date he excluded Harold Monro from its pages (though he had included examples of the early Monro in that other excellent anthology, *The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*). No wonder Q said in his supplementary preface, "But writing in 1939, I am at a loss what to do with a fashion of morose disparagement; of sneering at things long by catholic consent accounted beautiful; of scorning at 'Man's unconquerable mind'." In spite of all his benevolent sponsorings and a few real discoveries it was chiefly Harold Monro who initiated the decline in traditional taste. By 1939 things had gone from bad to very bad, so that there was complete muddle and morass, and Q was nearly as suspicious of the claims of the Georgians as of the new school, the Eliotites, who had opposed them. Both schools, strange to say, were in agreement against Tennyson and his period.

I think that Monro's antipathy to Tennyson had something to do with Edmund Spenser, for Tennyson in his *Idylls of the King* seems to have trodden in the footsteps of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, though technically these two sectional and long romantic and moralistic poems have nothing in common. I remember that when among my peace-offerings I sent Monro my *Offspring of Heaven and Hell*, a longish poem that was later published in *New Statesmen* (they never squander their columns like that nowadays), he rejected it complaining that it was too much like Spenser—

a ridiculous criticism considering the poem's violence and the fact that it was written in double-syllabled ottava rima, something technically new. But Monro was no real critic, and suffered somewhat from an anti-God complex.

His dislike of all traditional interpretations of God though I always wondered if there was not a great deal of real atheism in his attitude narrowed Monro. His final failure as sponsor and critic can be understood; but it is surprising that with all his literary and theological antipathies he managed to be so successful as a poet, for the fact remains that he was not only dynamic and original but verbally very traditional, and had many genuine and important admirers. Critics and anthologists who omit him from the period 1910-1930 are as unjust to him as he was to many of his predecessors and contemporaries.

I am, etc.,
HERBERT PALMER

Sir,

The publication of my review: "The Bouquet and the Burning Bush" has just brought me a most generous letter of appreciation from Mrs. Wynick, Isaac Rosenberg's sister. I feel that your readers would like to know how the poet met his death.

"He was always in the front-line trenches," writes Mrs. Wynick, "except for the usual brief spells. It was during one of these spells after days and days under fire, that a call went out for men to undertake a bombing expedition. Rosenberg instantly volunteered. From this journey he never returned."

I am, etc.,
P. D. CUMMINS.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT

(New Series: No. 4)

Out of a small field of entries for this competition, which closed on 15th December, 1950, and one not quite so good as usual, I divide the prize between Kathleen Richardson's "Last Light", and Jean Kenward's "Poem for Clare". Two remarkably contrasted poems, each good of its kind; all power, the one, all grace, the other.

T. W. Ramsey.

Highly Commended

Jenefer Carlyon, London, W.2.; Yorke Crompton, London, W.C.2.; H. V. S. Page, Liverpool; Edith Roseveare, London, S.W. 16.

Commended

Ronald Berry, Rotherham; W. D. Hinde, Manchester; Joan Jewell, Eastbourne ; Enid Madoc-Jones, Old Colwyn ; F. M. Venables, Bognor Regis.

LAST LIGHT

I have been satiated with words and visions,
Hunger, that urgent drove me to the feast
Served not to school my immature precisions
And fasting, ceased.

Youth is made up of many things,
Of melodrama,
Women in yellow corsets, knights in armour,
Fear of the dark; a long, sad concubinage
To rule and pattern,
(Fatuous kings, the masters of a slattern).
She whom the gods had goaded into being
Yet lacks wings;
Youth is made up of many things.

How shall I free my shallow pool's small tides?
The few bright leaves of wit my autumn shed there
Meander below the stagnant waterside,
Sodden, threadbare.

Flow, they must float! The thin washed colours fade,
Soon cometh winter, sighing through the sedges,
Break, swirl from your rushy palisades,

Reluctant pledges!
Or are my heralds
Paper coracles, early abed,
Each with its dying candle for the dead?

KATHLEEN V. RICHARDSON.

POEM FOR CLARE

Clare, who in season's spite are come
To be our little Rose or Plum
And with a sweet insouciance make
Summer for mere affection's sake,
Accept this birthday greeting: may
The sun go down upon your Day
Delightful, rubicund, and kind
And in his western wandering find
Nothing unnatural to defy
Your tiny personality.

Fate is your Fairy Godmother.
What shall we therefore ask of her?
That she may give you, if she will,
A nature nicely equable,
A subtle waist, a saucy wit—
A soft tongue to dispose of it,
A mind that like a lark will fly
Into the light, into the sky;
An eye to see, a foot to dance,
A not unpleasing Countenance.

JEAN KENWARD.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE POETRY SOCIETY: DONATIONS

Gifts have been received from the following, and are here gratefully acknowledged:—Benjamin Sturgis Pray, Milford E. Shiels, Hedley Lucas, Mrs. C. R. Henderson, Unilever Literary Society, Miss Mabel Parker, Eden Phillpotts. *The Complete Works of Byron,* edited by John Galt, has also been presented by G. C. Weaire.

THE POETRY SOCIETY : ANNUAL GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Annual General Business Meeting of the Poetry Society (Incorporated) will be held at the offices of the Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. on Wednesday, May 30th, 1951 at 3-0 p.m., to receive the annual financial statement, and elect the general members of the General Council. Names of delegates representing Centres should be sent to the General Secretary not later than April 12th together with names of the Centre representatives on the General Council.

Admission will be made upon production of membership cards.

Any member who wishes to bring any business before the Annual Meeting must give twenty-eight days' written notice thereof to the General Secretary. Nominations for membership to the General Council must be made by two members of the General Council or three unattached members twenty-eight days prior to the Meeting.

Any member wishing to inspect the audited Statement of Accounts before the General Business Meeting may do so at this office between the hours of 10 a.m and 5 p.m. (Saturdays excepted), or may have a copy sent on application enclosing a stamped addressed envelope after April 30th.

—By Order of the Council.

ADULT GOLD MEDAL EXAMINATION

Adjudicator: Geoffrey Crump

In his summing up remarks, at the conclusion of the Gold Medal Examination, 6th December, 1950, Mr. Crump said he had expected a high technical standard and had not been disappointed. He had seldom listened to an evening of Verse-speaking with greater interest and pleasure.

On the whole. the technical quality, both from the literary and interpretive point of view, was remarkably high. He warned candidates not to superimpose their own personality upon the poem, but to let the poet speak for himself. There was an inclination to sing, an inclination to use the voice for the sake of its sound. This, he said, was quite inexcusable. He advised candidates to forget their beautiful speech and to start taking that for granted, and really get inside the poem, imaginatively,—and see, and feel the things the poet was talking about.

The successful candidates were Miss Ruth Rafferty and Miss Thelma Tillaney.

TEACHERS' CONFERENCE

The President, opening the proceedings on 5th January, 1951, said that the Conference was meeting under the shadow of a cloud. He referred to the unexpected and sudden loss

sustained by the Society in the death of Miss E. May Cattell. Those who knew Miss Cattell, will remember the many lovable traits of character which she possessed and which endeared her to so many. She was one of the most cheerful and delightful companions and had a remarkable knowledge and enthusiasm and zest for living, which makes it as incomprehensible as it is sad, that she has gone from us so suddenly and unexpectedly. The Poetry Society and those who knew her, will mourn the passing of a very good friend and a loyal and devoted worker. She was one of the most popular and best examiners, and was liked wherever she went for her endearing personal characteristics, and for her deep knowledge and enthusiasm for the work she did. Her place will be hard to fill.

The Council greatly value the work of the Society from the Auditions point of view. The Auditions are not perhaps the most spectacular activity of the Poetry Society, but they are the most valuable. The Poetry Society exists to foster among people the love of poetry—and where could this be done better than among young people?

Touching upon the question of Medals, the President speaking of the importance of winning a Medal, and of the pleasure of possessing the Medal when won, somewhat ruefully admitted that with the needs of the Re-Armament Plan pressing upon the country, the question of medals was not going to improve for some time. We are doing our best to get medals produced promptly, and would ask teachers and pupils to be patient with us.

The President read a letter from Miss Jean Hamilton apologising for her inability to attend the Conference, and requesting him to thank the Staff for their co-operation. She said, as an examiner, the arrangements made by the Office were most helpful and greatly added to the enjoyment of her work.

Madame Hampton suggested that the test-pieces should be published in book form. The President said that this was still under consideration along with other publishing activities, but there were of course, many difficulties.

Madame Hampton asked how elastic the term "Poetic Drama" was. Many of her pupils had asked her whether the work had to be poetry or could possibly be blank verse. In reply, Miss Hudson said that the term "Poetic Drama" meant any verse play, strictly verse drama, in fact anything which could be played on the stage in verse.

Mrs. Brent suggested that a recital of the test pieces by the examiners would be a great advantage to candidates and would enable them to hear the pieces spoken properly. She thought it would be a great attraction to all students, especially as many of them were finding the criticisms so helpful. Madame Moore said she considered it would be better for the children to arrive at the meaning of the poem themselves rather than copy something which attracts the ear. She pointed out that the majority of children were imitative, and would not appreciate the poem unless they arrived at the meaning themselves. Miss Watson said she agreed with Madame Moore, adding that in her experience young people did really love poetry, and their rendering was different because it was their mind. But she thought Mrs. Brent's idea a very good one, providing they had already taken the examination. The President said that Mrs. Brent meant it would be good for the children to hear the Examiners' recital from an educational point of view, and would increase an interest and appreciation of the work being done.

Miss Hudson suggested that the organisers of the Junior Verse Readings should bear in mind the syllabus when arranging speakers, and making selections.

Miss Beatrice Rose said she found the joyousness of "giving out" had vanished recently, and that the children were concerned about technique rather than appreciation and love of poetry. Miss Sherborne speaking on behalf of the examiners, said she would never give high marks to any child whom she considered was thinking of technique before the mood. Miss Cockin said it was the technique that helped to portray the mood. Many of the teachers said that the criticisms they had received had been most helpful and in perfect balance academically and technically speaking, and all thanked the examiners for their understanding and constructive advice.

Miss Sherborne asked if the teachers preferred remarks at the end of an examination or not. She said that in some candidates she had seen a particular fault recurring, and she wondered if perhaps the teachers would prefer a private criticism to that of a public one to all the candidates. In reply Miss Watson said she felt from the examiners' point of view, the examiners knew generally when they summed up at the end of a class whether they were criticising the children or the teacher, and if they felt there was something they would like to mention to the teacher, they could always mention it privately, afterwards, and it would be a pity to spoil the good relationship which existed between teacher, children and examiner.

Miss Robinson said she enjoyed having a little chat with the teacher, as then the examiner could ask about the background of certain children, and whether they had a certain kind of defect, and this she found invaluable. Miss Pointer said that any criticisms she had received had always been most helpful.

Madame Hampton asked if gestures were liked in the Shakespeare Section, and Miss Hudson replied it was at the discretion of the teacher. Some teachers were capable of producing a beautiful scene with very little movement, as it was the feeling inside the speaker that mattered and not the outward movement.

Miss Power said it would be most helpful if the examiner could tell the children occasionally the correct pronunciation of certain words, which would bear out the teacher, as one word from an examiner can mean a great deal to a pupil. Miss Shuttleworth added that in spite of the fact that pronunciations did change, there were certain standards, and maintaining this was one of the main duties of the Poetry Society in its examining capacity. It was suggested that an article on the correct pronunciation of words might be published in the forthcoming Junior Magazine, *The Voice of Youth*.

Mr. Graddon gave a brief outline of the aims and objects of the Junior Membership, and asked the teachers to encourage their pupils to join. Miss Watson in giving a vote of thanks to the meeting, thanked the President for his astute chairmanship, and the examiners for their understanding and helpful criticisms in the past.

The Meeting closed at 4 o'clock, and the teachers and examiners were invited to have tea.

THE POETRY SOCIETY: FRIDAY READINGS

The readings at 33, Portman Square, W.1, each Friday at 6-15, continue as a regular feature. They are followed by an Open Meeting for general discussion and conversation. All are invited to attend, even if they cannot come to the more formal meeting earlier in the evening.

CENTRES

THE BATH POETRY CENTRE

At an inaugural meeting on 1st December, 1950, it was decided, until further notice, to hold meetings at the flat of Mrs. L. Bredin at 21 Camden Crescent, Bath, on every fourth Wednesday of 1951.

Enquiries to:—James Angell, Esq., Bedwyn, Westbury Avenue, Combe Down, Bath, Somerset.

THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to the General Secretary and Treasurer: Mrs. T. Weston Ramsey, 89 Poplar Avenue, Hove.

Fixtures every third Saturday in the month at the Glenside Hotel, 65 Grand Parade, Brighton. Readings at 4.30 until 6 p.m., (and it is hoped to start a Children's Section

from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m., previous to the Adult Meeting). Tudor Café attached. Refreshments if desired.

On January 20th, Miss Marjorie Hellier's reading was well-acclaimed, and particularly appreciated in view of the smallpox epidemic then prevailing.

Future fixtures include "Selected Poems of Francis Thompson and Gerard Manley Hopkins, read by T. W. Ramsey, F.R.S.L., President of the Poetry Society.

On April 21st, John Gawsworth, F.R.S.L., editor of *The Poetry Review*, will read from his *Collected Poems*.

THE BOSTON POETRY CENTRE

Meetings held monthly. Full details from: Miss Blanche J. Bigelow, 163 Eliot Street, Milton 87, Mass.

THE CHELSEA POETRY CIRCLE

(Affiliated to the Poetry Society. Formed 1946)

President:
Dame Sybil Thorndike

Vice-President:
Miss Margaret Rawlings

Informal readings are held each month in members' homes, and occasional public readings at the National Trust Museum, 3 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.3. Full particulars from the *Hon. Secretary*, John E. Carroll, 5 Redesdale Street, S.W.3.

THE EALING POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—The Secretary, 10 Culmington Road, Ealing, W.13.

THE FLORIDA POETRY CENTRES

(Formed 1946)

President General:
Marie Tello Phillips
6427 Darlington Rd.,
Pittsburgh 17, Pa., U.S.A.

Vice-President General:
Lillie Reed Zortman
230 Forest Ave., Ben Avon,
Pgh. 2, Pa., U.S.A.

State Presidents:

Connecticut: Lillie Offen Reed.
Florida: Pearl Safford.
Indiana: Grace Porterfield Polk.
Kentucky: Ethel Koger.
Maine: Effie Lawrence Marshall.
Minnesota: Margarette Dickson.
Pennsylvania: Lillie Reed Zortman.
Tennessee: Polly McKibben.

THE GUILDFORD POETRY CENTRE

On Wednesday, January 3rd, an excellent reading was given by Miss Stella Porter, who is a star pupil of Miss Mollie Hudson. Her rendering of de la Mare's poems was given with great understanding and feeling and her audience was with her throughout the whole performance. As a Reader her future will be well worth watching.

Details of meetings may be obtained from The Centre Secretary, Mrs. F. E. Coker, 20 Litchfield Way, Guildford, Surrey.

THE HAMPSTEAD POETRY CENTRE (1909)

Meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays in each month at 8—9-30 p.m., at 9 Wentworth Mansions, Keats Grove, N.W.3., and the following Programme has been arranged:

March 15th. Everyman. A Morality Play, circ. 1490.
April 5th. Birds.
April 19th. The Beauty of the Commonplace, arranged by Miss E. Vaughan Jenkins.

THE KENSINGTON CENTRE

New members are welcome in any numbers and should write to Mr. Vivian Burbury, 12 Bassett Road, Ladbroke Grove, who will invite them to attend.

THE LEWES POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to :—Mrs. Doris R. Richards, East Way. Ditchling, Sussex.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—H. Haddock, 18 Ashley Gardens, Belfast.

THE NOTTINGHAM POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Lake Aske, Esq., 281 Wilford Lane, Nottingham.

THE REIGATE POETRY CENTRE

Details of Meetings may be obtained from the Centre Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Hicks, The Alton, Alma Road, Reigate.

THE ST. PETERSBURG (U.S.A.) CENTRE
(Formed 1946)

Members and potential members are invited to communicate with the President, Helen T. Douglas Robinson, 815 Jackson Street North, St. Petersburg, 6, Florida. The centre seeks to promote production of the best in poetry. Helen Robinson writes: "One of our Branch members, Florence C. Robinson, our artist sister (deceased June, 1950) was awarded, posthumously, a gold medal by the Schroeder Foundation, International. To this dear poet-soul we would pay our tribute."

THE SOUTHAMPTON POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Miss Joy Brider, 9 Archers Road, Southampton.

THE STROUD CENTRE

For particulars of Membership, please apply to the Hon. Secretary of the Stroud Poetry Centre at Steanbridge, Slad, Nr. Stroud.

THE WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE POETRY CENTRE

Enquiries should be sent to:—Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, 28 Oatlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey.

A most successful meeting was held on January 11th, when Mrs. Freyer, of the Speech Fellowship read a pleasing variety of poems, and there was a warm discussion on the best manner of expressing the poet's meaning.

March 8th. John Gawsworth, F.R.S.L., reading from his *Collected Poems*.

Will anyone able and willing to start a Centre in any part of the country please communicate with the Secretary, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

POETS' GROUP OF THE POETRY SOCIETY

This Group, dedicated to furthering the work of active Poets within the Society, gathers "to hear each other's work and discuss the spirit and substance of poetry." All interested in attending future meetings are invited to communicate with me at The Well House, Ewell, Surrey. LEIGH HENRY

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S CRITICAL SERVICE

The Poetry Society has pleasure in announcing the continuance of its Critical Service for Members. Two poems only may be submitted for criticism, for a minimum fee of 5s. The charge for the criticism of each additional poem is 2s. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.

THE POETRY SOCIETY'S AUDITIONS AND EXAMINATIONS

The Poetry Society has conducted auditions and examinations in the art of verse-speaking for many years, and its success in this valuable cultural activity is attested by the fact that the number of schools and institutions in all parts of England which the Society examines, continually increases.

Junior preliminary examinations are available for the youngest children and these continue through various grades, up to the final test for adult students, for which the Society's gold medal is the final award for success.

General regulations governing these auditions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, with whom arrangements can be made for auditions for schools, colleges, or private individuals.

COMPETITIONS

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITIONS FOR 1951

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of £20 as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed "The Greenwood Prize", 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editor, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*.

Closing date is 31st December, 1951.

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above bi-monthly competition continues as before with the total entrance fees as prize money which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired. (See Rule 3.)
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed "Premium Competition", *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize twice will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 15th April, 1951.

THE HOWARD PARSONS' EPIGRAM COMPETITION: 1952

The Poetry Society is empowered by Mr. Howard Parsons, a long-standing member of the Society, to offer the following prizes, endowed by him for an Epigram Competition.

1st prize, 5 guineas; 2nd prize, 2 guineas; 3rd prize, 1 guinea. Entries which should not have been previously published should be marked "Epigram" and should not bear a stamped addressed envelope, as MSS. cannot be returned. They should be addressed to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, to reach here not later than 1st March, 1952. The Society reserves the right to extend the closing date of the competition should none of the entries reach the required standard.

THE POETRY SOCIETY JUNIOR VERSE COMPETITION

The Poetry Society have pleasure in announcing the next annual Junior Verse Competition. Schools throughout the country are invited to co-operate in submitting the work of their pupils.

The Competition will be divided into two classes:

(*a*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age up to thirteen years last birthday. There will be a book prize inscribed by the Poetry Society.

(*b*) Not more than one poem, previously unpublished, to be submitted by any one competitor, age from fourteen to seventeen years last birthday. There will be a book prize, inscribed by the Poetry Society and four additional prizes of one year's Membership to the Poetry Society.

The poem may be on any subject. Closing date, 30th June, 1951. Entries to be addressed to: The Junior Verse Competition, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear the names and addresses of competitors and copies should be retained as these cannot be returned.

THE LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS SONNET COMPETITION FOR 1951

The Poetry Society has the pleasure of announcing the fourth Annual Competition in memory of Lord Alfred Douglas for a sonnet upon any subject. One of the two forms adopted by Lord Alfred Douglas in his sonnets, must be used; these are:

For the Octave — 1, 2, 2, 1; 1, 2, 2, 1.
For the Sextet — 3, 4, 5; 3, 4, 5 *or* 3, 4; 3, 4; 3, 4.

The prize of £10 may be divided at the discretion of the adjudicator; the winning poem or poems will be published with the award in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors must retain copies of their poems as these cannot be returned. The sonnets should bear a definite title and not merely marked "Sonnet". Not more than two sonnets may be submitted by each competitor by 30th June, 1951. Address "Sonnet Competition", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Entries should bear names and addresses of competitors. No previously published poem may be entered.

POEMS OF PLACE COMPETITION FOR 1951

Mrs. A. Dorothy Holmes, a Shropshire member of The Poetry Society, offers £10 annually in competition for poems of place. Competitors who must be members of The Poetry Society, may submit not more than two poems, previously unpublished, of not more than 100 lines. All entries should be typewritten and bear the name and address of the author; poems should be addressed to "The Holmes Prize", The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1, not later than 1st April, 1951. The judges may divide the prize money at their discretion, and the winning poem or poems may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Competitors are asked to keep copies of their entries as these cannot be returned.

THE POETRY SOCIETY

(Incorporated)

Every boy and girl under eighteen years of age is now entitled to become a Junior Member of the Poetry Society.

Every junior member will enjoy the privileges of an ordinary member but, instead of *The Poetry Review*, will receive each quarter, post free, a special magazine called *The Voice of Youth*.

The Voice of Youth will be the only magazine in the country addressed solely to all under eighteen, and devoted wholly to poetry. There will be special articles about the way poets write, the thrill of finding their meaning, how poetry grew from ballad songs, the ways in which poets of to-day are seeking to find new ways to express themselves, the adventure of selecting and manipulating words to create a poem, the way to use the human voice to convey the true inner meaning of poetry, and so on.

There will be competitions in every issue, the opportunity of getting one's special efforts criticised by experts. A part will always be devoted to printing the best that is written by the junior members themselves.

Books and gramophone records will be reviewed. Queries will be answered and an open correspondence column will be there for the readers to give their own views.

The Poetry Society is the largest fellowship of poetry lovers in the world and, for over forty years, has played a great part in maintaining the strength and purity of this our English heritage.

YOU have the opportunity of joining as a Junior Member.

You can do so quite easily by completing the form below.

I,..... Date of Birth.....
Name in Block Letters.

of .....

apply for membership of the Poetry Society as a Junior Member, and enclose 5s. being subscription for one year.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square.